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Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Evaluation Land South of Lyndale,
Lindridge Lane, Desford, Leicestershire LE9 9GN**

NGR: SK 47746 03920

Andrew McLeish



ULAS Report No:2024-020
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Site Name: Land South of Lyndale, Lindridge Lane, Desford, Leicestershire

Grid Ref: SK 47746 03920

Author: Andrew McLeish

Client: XL Designs (Midlands) Ltd

Planning Authority: Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

Planning Ref. 23/00445/OUT

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OASIS RECORD

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	Project Name	Land South of Lyndale, Lindridge Lane, Desford, Leicestershire		
	Start/end dates	11/03/2024		
	Previous/Future Work	None		
	Project Type	Evaluation		
	Site Status			
	Current Land Use	Pasture		
	Monument Type/Period	None		
	Significant Finds/Period	None		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Conditional		
PROJECT LOCATION	Planning Ref.	23/00445/OUT		
	County	Leicestershire		
	Site Address/Postcode	LE9 9GN		
	Study Area	0.41ha		
	Site Coordinates	SK 47746 03920		
PROJECT CREATORS	Height OD	103 – 105m AOD		
	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator			
	Project Design Originator	ULAS		
	Project Manager	Matthew Beamish		
	Project Director/Supervisor	Andrew McLeish		
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An Archaeological Evaluation Land South of Lyndale, Lindridge Lane, Desford, Leicestershire

Andrew McLeish

Summary

This report details the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on land South of Lyndale, Lindridge Lane, Desford, Leicestershire LE9 9GN (NGR SK 47746 03920:). The work was undertaken on the 11th of May 2024 in advance of residential development.

Three 25m long evaluation trenches were excavated across the proposed development area. All three trenches proved negative for archaeological features.

Following discussion with the archaeological advisor to the planning authority, as the project is sterile no separate archive for the work will be deposited with Leicestershire Museum Services under accession number X.A124.2023. The complete archive is included in this report which will be deposited with ADS through the OASIS mechanism.

Introduction

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 16 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* (DLUHC 2023) this document forms the report for an archaeological evaluation on land South of Lyndale, Lindridge Lane, Desford, Leicestershire.

The work was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on behalf of XL Designs (Midlands) Ltd

Planning Permission (23/00445/OUT) has been granted for the proposed development of four dwellings and associated garages and access (Fig. 3). The Planning Archaeologist as advisor to the Planning Authority have requested that archaeological evaluation is undertaken in order to determine the archaeological potential of the proposed site and the impact that the proposed development might have on it (Condition 11).

The decision notice issued by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council requires a programme of archaeological trial trenching. The archaeological advisor for the Borough Council has requested a total of three 25m long trial trenches to be conducted as an initial stage of the proposed development.

Site Location, Geology and Topography

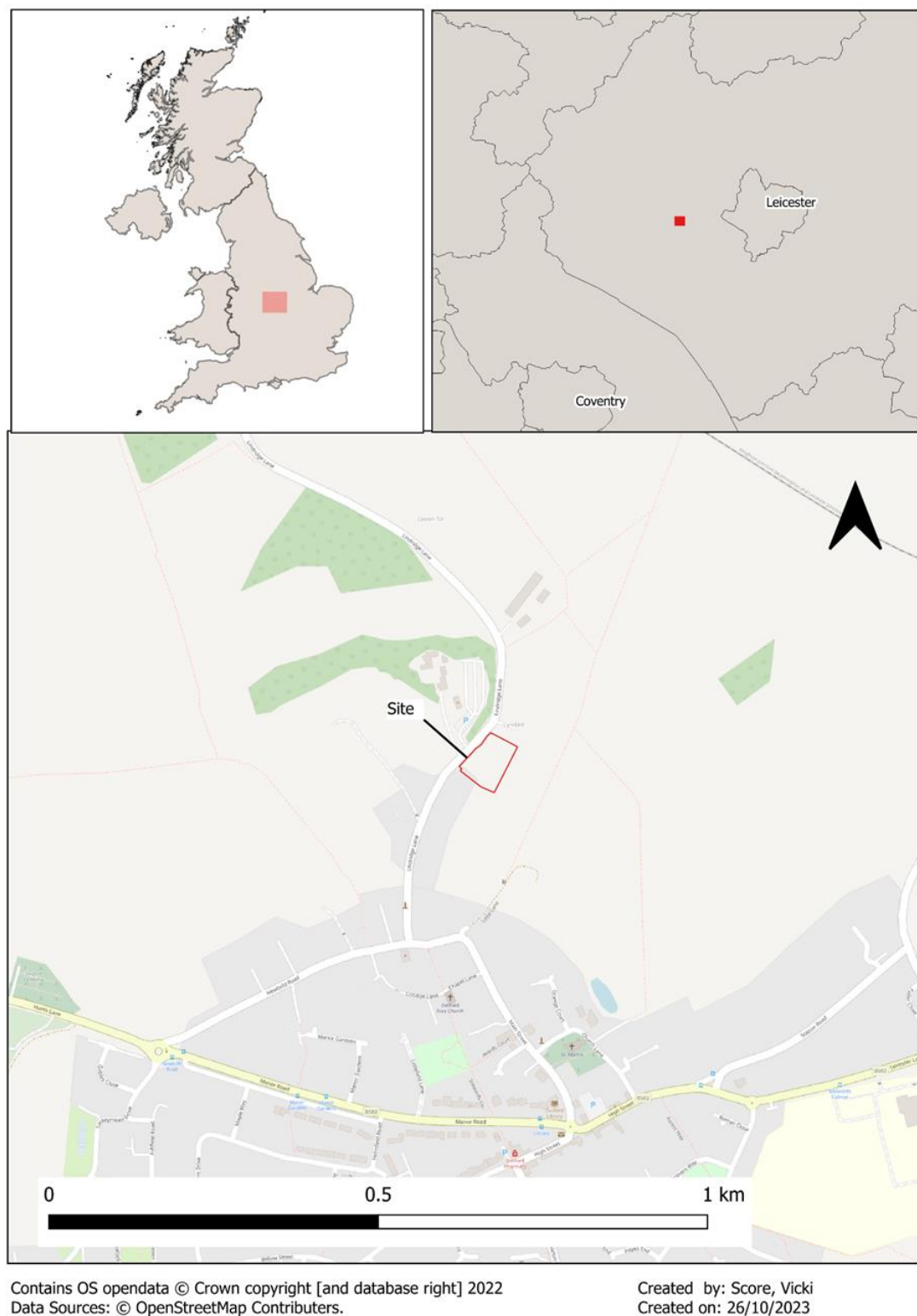


Figure 1: Position of site within the County of Leicestershire (red line depicts approximate area of development)

Desford is a village and civil parish in Hinckley and Bosworth district, 7 miles west of the centre of Leicester. The proposed development area (PDA) is approximately 0.41 ha and

consists of a rectangular site, accessed from Lindridge Road. It is located to the immediate south of Lyndale house, a former cattery on the east side of Lindridge Road (Fig. 1). It is located on a gentle north-facing slope and lies between 102m and 106m above OD.

The British Geological Survey identifies the geology of the east of the site is Cotgrave Sandstone Member - Sandstone. Sedimentary bedrock changing to Edwalton Member - Mudstone. Sedimentary bedrock to the west (BGS; <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/bgs-geology-viewer/> accessed 26/10/2023).

The Soilscape website indicates that the soils, will be Slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage (Soilscape 8 <http://www.landis.org.uk/soilscales/> accessed 26/10/2023).

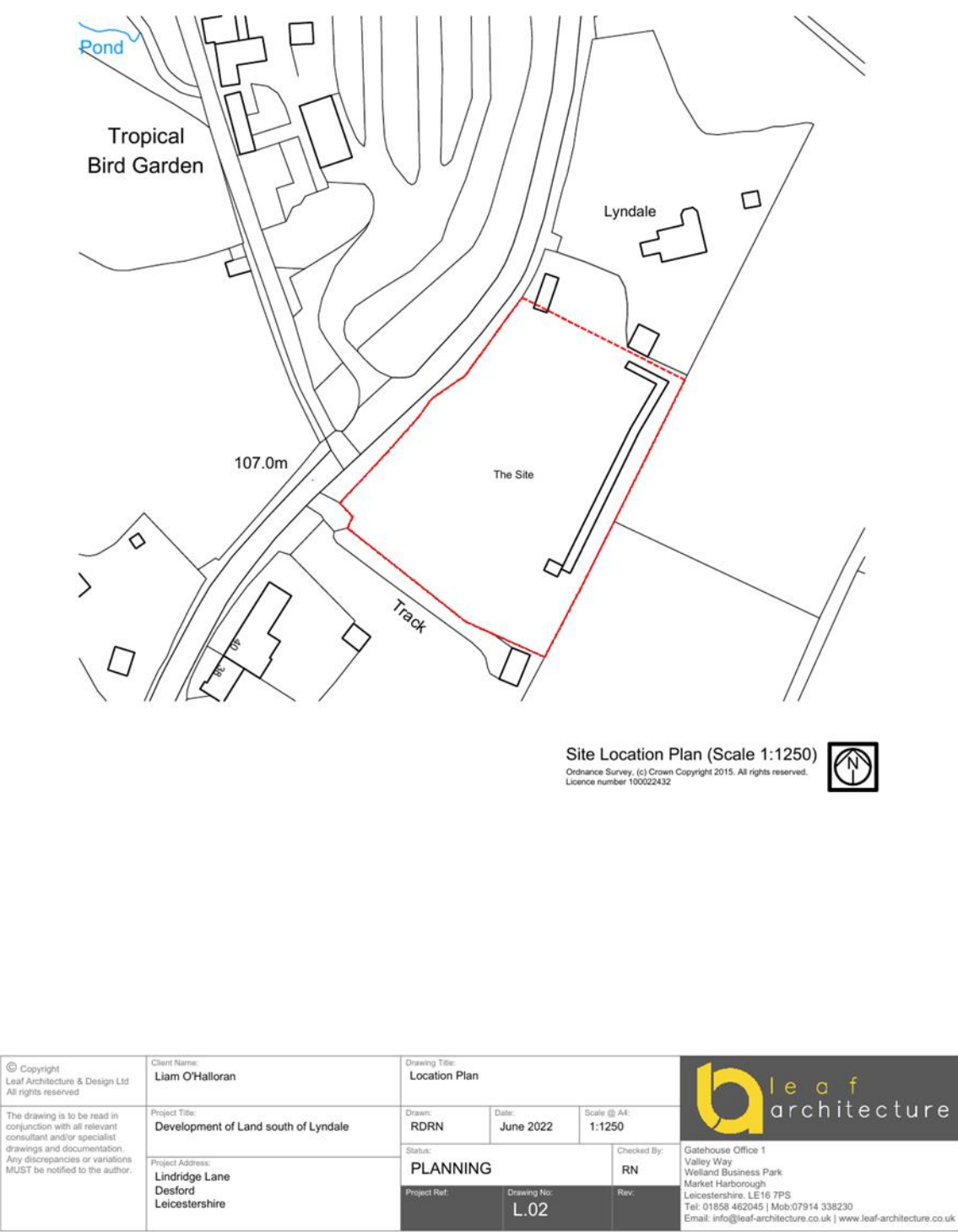


Figure 2: Illustrative masterplan of the development area within Desford, Leicestershire.
(Plan supplied by client)



Figure 3 Detailed site location plan showing proposals (provided by client).

Historical and Archaeological Background

The Leicestershire and Rutland HER has identified the following:

Prehistoric – Roman

An Iron Age/Roman site (HER **MLE9267**), located off Leicester Lane revealed two phases of activity was excavated 680m south-east of the site. an enclosure and corn drier; the enclosure and evidence for metalworking. Tile recovered suggests a stone building nearby.

In 1960 a Roman kiln (**MLE2742**) was found during building work, some 521m south of the site at 29 Main Street. It had a clay floor and many firebars. It was c. 2'6" in diameter with a stokehole at the north-east and was c. 2' long. It was making greyware in the 2nd century. A second kiln was found 50 yds to the south-west. Trial trenching in 2013 found three pieces of Roman pottery but no further kiln feature.

A scatter of Roman pottery was found in the 1990's (**MLE2737**) 640m north-west of the development area. A single sherd of Mortaria (**MLE22286**) was found 762m to the north-east.

Anglo-Saxon to Medieval

The historic settlement core of Desford (**MLE2751**) is mapped at over 520m south of the site by the HER. It was recorded as Diresford/Deresfordin 1086 (Domesday Book) and is likely to have its origins in the late Saxon period. It was occupied throughout the Medieval period.

A Medieval copper alloy cauldron foot (**MLE20307**) is recorded as being found somewhere near Bosworth College. Earthworks (**MLE2748**) of three long Medieval fishponds and two small ponds likely to be breeding tanks are known 300m east of the College, in the vicinity of further banks and ditches (**MLE17058**)

The earthwork and buried remains of a medieval moated site (**MLE2738**, Monument Number **314940**) with associated enclosures and pond (**MLE2739**) 944m north-west of the site.

The possible site of a castle known as Castlehill (**MLE2736**) is located 342m south-east.

Post-medieval to modern

Desford Station (**MLE26648**) now converted to residential use after the station closed in 1964, opened in 1848 as part of the Leicester to Swannington Railway (**MLE16056**) originally part of the Leicester to Burton Branch Line is located 858m north-east.

The site of a post-medieval watermill (**MLE2730**) which ceased working in 1922 is located 945m north-east. It is also the site of a possible medieval water mill (**MLE2729**) first mentioned in 1140. There was also the possible windmill added to the site in 1709 (**MLE2731**).

Lindridge colliery (**MLE21330**) 836m north-west. The colliery was originally sunk in 1875. Production ceased in 1887.

Listed buildings

There are a number of listed buildings in and around Desford. The Grade II listed Malthouse Cottages 40-42 Newbold Road, 15th Century with later additions (**1074080**), 10 Newbold Road 19th century house (**1116107**), 2 Newbold Road a 17th century house (**1361382**), the late 19th century Desford School (**1116099**), 50 Main Street former 19th century schoolmasters house (**1074079**)

There is also the Desford War memorial (**1454788**), the Grange 17 Church Lane 18th century (**1074074**), late 18th century Manor Farmhouse (1074076), a Pigeoncote at 32 High Street (**1116124**), late 18th century Desford post Office (**1361381**), 16 High Street (**1361380**) a c.1600 timber-framed house.

There are also two Grade II* listed buildings, 13-14th century Church of St Martin (**1361378**), the 17th century old Manor House 32 High Street (**1074078**).

There are also other heritage assets identified. Late 19th century Public House Lancaster Arms, Station Road (**MLE26647**) is located 843m to the east. The 19th century Gables Farm, Newbold Road (**MLE26644**) is located 529m to the south-west. 61, Newbold Road (**MLE26641**) a three-storey brick-built house with a name/date stone which reads "Moorwood House 1886", 529m to the south-west. Linwood Cottage 1906 (**MLE26637**) is 185m to the north-west. 1 and 3 Kirby Road (**MLE26624** and **MLE26625**) a pair of Edwardian houses built in the Arts and Crafts style are located 106m south. 20 & 22, Station Road (**MLE26646**) a semi-detached pair of dwellings constructed in an Arts and Crafts style, built around 1920 are located 663m to the south-east. 59, Newbold Road, Desford (**MLE26640**) is an illustration of a post-WW1 council house, constructed c.1930. It was formerly a 'Victory Garden' during

WWII so was the only house in the village permitted to keep the iron railings along the front and side boundary is located 523m to the south-west.

Previous archaeological work

In 1999 trial trenching took place on land off Leicester Lane, produced evidence for activity from the Bronze Age, Iron Age and Romano-British periods. 709m south-east. The evidence included a dense scatter of intercutting features, possibly reflecting pits, ditches and structural activity. Two areas of very leached soil were recorded, one of which produced worked flint of possible early Bronze Age date (c. 2000-1500BC). Several sherds of late Iron Age/transitional pottery were also recovered hinting at 1st century BC/AD occupation. The majority of the features appeared to be of Romano-British date, predominantly 2nd-4th century AD. Of those excavated the most interesting were the remains of a possible corn drying oven with good preservation of organic remains (Thomas 1999).

The subsequent excavation 2000 revealed the archaeological remains had been heavily affected by medieval ridge and furrow. Much of the remains dated to the transitional period between the late Iron Age and early Romano-British period. Part of a substantial, squared, 'v' shaped ditched enclosure, thought to date to the 1st century BC/ AD, was revealed on the western part of the site, around which the rest of the activity was focused. A single pit was revealed within the enclosure, which remained undated. The features surrounding the enclosure included scattered postholes indicating the vestiges of un-interpretable structures, pits and gullies which provided evidence for localised, domestic activity on the site. A broad later period of activity (2nd -4th century AD) was also represented in which the enclosure ditch went out of use and the focus of settlement shifted. Small scale activity continued on the site with evidence for metalworking and possibly, stone buildings in the near vicinity indicated by a collection of roofing tile (Thomas 2000)

Trial trenching carried out in 2013 at 23 Main Street, south of the site, found a number of features including a pit, gully and posthole. The associated pottery assemblage provided a date range of 850-1539 AD (Trott 2013) (**MLE20694**).

In 2019 an evaluation on land at Barn's Way identified a small pit containing a sherd of very abraded Neolithic to Bronze Age pottery, 844m south-east (Barr 2019) (**MLE20694**).

Trial trenching in 2019 at 51 Main Street recorded two pits and a post hole, probably representing back yard medieval activity associated with properties fronting onto the main street. A few sherds of medieval pottery and fragments of animal bone were recovered Baker 2019. Further pits/postholes were recorded during excavation in 2020, and two probable post-medieval animal burials (Coward 2020) (**MLE25372**).

Trial trenching in 2020 recorded a shallow medieval pit. Its fill contained five sherds of very abraded medieval (Potters Marston) cooking pot (McLeish 2019). Further excavation in 2020 centred on the pit revealed three further features, consisting of a gully containing medieval pottery, a large shallow ditch containing late C18th-C19th pottery, and an undated pit, most likely representing a tree throw. The original pit was also fully excavated. Two sherds of C12th/C13th Potters Marston pottery were recovered; one was a further sherd of the pot found in the original pit (Clapton 2020) (**MLE25389**).

Aims and Objectives

The main aim of the evaluation is to provide information on any archaeological remains in order for the local planning authority to make informed recommendations and to identify an appropriate mitigation strategy for the proposed development.

The main objectives of the archaeological work are:

1. To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
2. To characterise the extent, date range, character, condition and significance of any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
3. To excavate and record archaeological deposits uncovered during the work.
4. To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological deposits and features encountered.
5. Interpret the archaeology of the site within its local, regional, and national, archaeological context.
6. To advance understanding of the heritage assets and establish the relationship of any remains within the wider landscape.
7. To produce a report and archive of the results.

Research objectives

The site has the potential to add to research objectives mainly from the Roman, Medieval, and post-medieval periods, identified within the *East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework*

<https://researchframeworks.org/emherf/introducing-the-research-agenda/>

The presence of Roman and medieval archaeology in the vicinity of the site indicates a potential for archaeology relating to these periods. Proximity to the Medieval settlement of Desford and Moated Manor House site, as well the presence of Roman finds recovered during archaeological evaluation and excavation, would indicate a good potential for archaeology within the site. Post-medieval features recorded during archaeological evaluation. There is therefore potential for remains that could contribute to the following Research Objectives:

Roman

- 5B *Support the dissemination and synthesis of information on Roman finds*
- 5H Investigate landscape contexts of rural settlements.
- 5I Support research and publication of landscape syntheses.
- 5J Instigate regional scale characterisation study of industry

Medieval

- 6J Update and expand East Midlands Anglo-Saxon Pottery Project.
- 7E Investigate the morphology of rural settlements.
- 7F *Investigate the development, structure and landholdings of manorial estate centres*
- 7I *Investigate the development of the open-field system and medieval woodland management*

These research aims have been identified based on the current state of knowledge within the area of the scheme and will be re-assessed and updated during the course of the fieldwork.

Constraints

A line search survey was carried out prior to the WSI being compiled. No known buried services were identified within the site. All trenches were checked with a CAT scanner before excavation took place. There was an overhead cable just on the north side of the site entrance across Lindridge Road.

A bank 34m long and 9m wide is visible in the centre of the site broadly parallel with the concrete foundations for the cattery. The current site occupant understood this bank to have been created when the cattery was constructed. Trenches are located away from the feature.

An area of woodland is to be retained on the western side of the site. Trench 3 was moved further to the east from its original location to avoid tree felling work and to avoid damage to tree roots from tress planned to be retained in the new development.

Trenching was undertaken following a period of heavy rain. Although the topsoil was found to be waterlogged, the underlying subsoil was machinable and the waterlogging of the topsoil did not impact on the success of the evaluation.



Figure 4: The site with trenching underway, looking north.

Methodology

The work followed the procedures set out in the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the project (ULAS 2024).

All work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (updated 2020) and adhered to their *Code of Conduct* (updated 2021). The Accession Number (XA.124.2023) was used to identify all records and artefacts.

Fieldwork was carried out by ULAS on the 11th of March 2024 and was followed by post-excavation and reporting.

The project involved the excavation of three 25m long trenches across the development area using a JCB wheeled excavator with a 1.60m ditching bucket.

On arrival at the site the position of the trenches were marked out across the area and positioned over the footprints of the new access road and dwellings (Fig. 4).

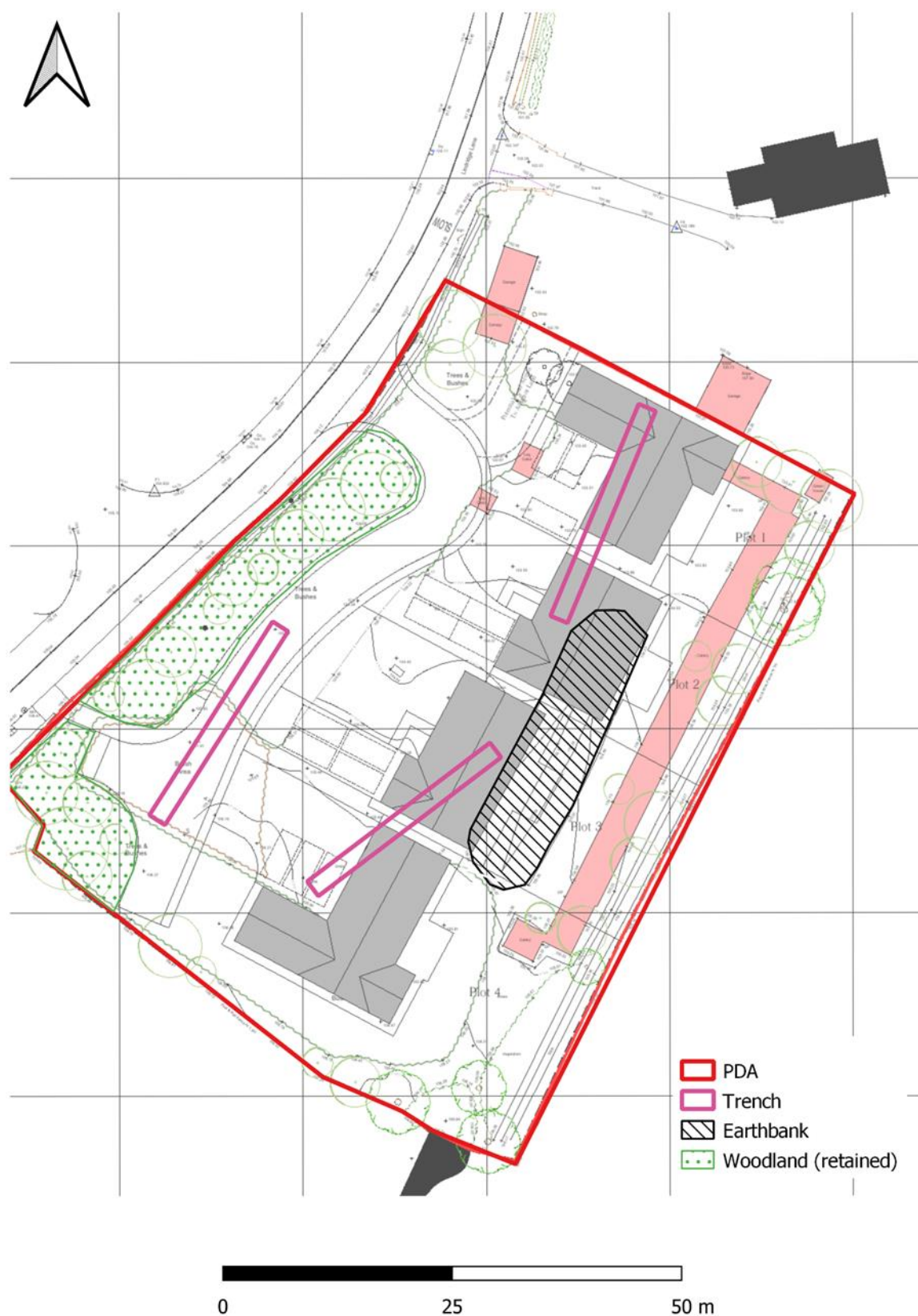


Figure 5: Proposed location of trenches overlaid of the planned development.

Monitoring

Internal monitoring procedures were undertaken with the project manager, to ensure that project targets were met and professional standards maintained. No monitoring visits were undertaken, but photos and descriptions of the results were shared with the archaeological advisor to the planning authority during the course of the work.

Results

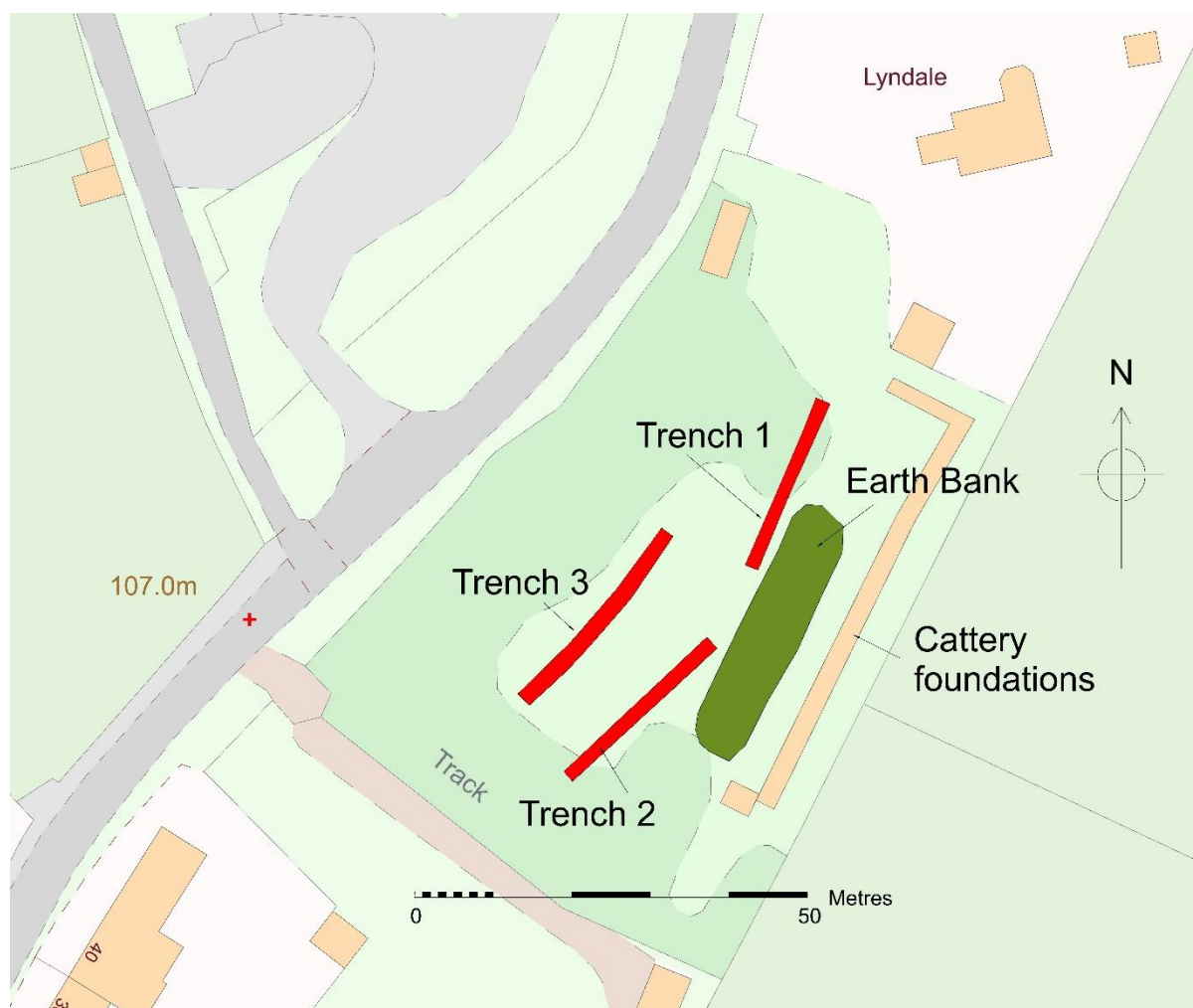


Figure 6 Location of trenches.

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All three trenches shared the same topsoil, subsoil and underlying clay natural and these are described thus;

Topsoil, (1) 0.20 to 0.30 m thick dark brownish grey, waterlogged, spongy silty loam with frequent roots with a sharp smooth boundary onto the subsoil.

Subsoil (2) 0.40 to 0.50 m thick mid reddish brown moist, malleable sandy clay with rare small sub-rounded spheroidal pebbles, evenly distributed. It has been disturbed by tree roots. The lower boundary to the underlying natural is sharp and smooth.

Natural geology comprises of a mid-pinkish red firm clay with moderately large angular broken stone, evenly distributed. The natural has not been affected by tree roots except in trench three where the tree cover was thicker. Depth not known.

Trench 1

25m x 1.7m

OD Height: m AOD (top of trench)	Orientation	Topsoil Depth	Subsoil Depth	Top of natural	Min depth of trench	Max depth of trench
Max 104.202m Min 103.362m	NE-SW	0.2 – 0.3m	0.4-0.5m	0.6m	0.6m	0.76m



Figure 7 Trench 1 looking south.

Trench 2

25m x 1.7m

OD Height: m AOD	Orientation	Topsoil	Subsoil	Top of	Min depth of	Max depth
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(top of trench)		Depth	Depth	natural	trench	of trench
Max 105.834 m Min 104.617m	NE-SW	0.2 -0.3m	0.26 -0.39m	0.48 -0.5m	0.48m	0.95m



Figure 8 Trench 2 looking south west.

Trench 3

25m x 1.7m

OD Height: m AOD (top of trench)	Orientation	Topsoil Depth	Subsoil Depth	Top of natural	Min depth of trench	Max depth of trench
Max 105.870m	NE-SW	0.16 – 0.22m	0.1 – 0.26m	0.35m -	0.35m	0.6m

Min 104.097				0.65m		
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Figure 9 Trench 3 looking north east.

Discussion and Conclusion

All three trenches were negative of any archaeology, and also of any modern intrusions beyond tree rooting.

Archive and Publication

In line with the guidance outlined 'Leicestershire Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Leicestershire County Council Museum Collections (2024) and the CIfA Toolkit for selecting archaeological archives, as the site was negative the on-site data collected digitally using DiggIt [[http://\(www.diggitararchaeology.com\)\(www.diggitararchaeology.com\)](http://(www.diggitararchaeology.com)(www.diggitararchaeology.com))] and the photographic records are presented within the report (see appendices 2 and 3) rather than deposited as digital files with the ADS. During the project set-up the accession number X.A164.2023 was allocated to the site but this is no longer required as an identifier for depositing material in the museum.

The online OASIS data entry has been completed detailing the results of the project and the report will be digitally accessible through The Archaeological Data Services (<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/>) with universi1-523588 as the identifier..

A summary of this report will appear in due course in the Transactions the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society.

The online OASIS data entry has been completed detailing the results of the project and will be digitally accessible through The Archaeological Data Services (<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/>).

Acknowledgements

ULAS would like to thank the client Adam Page for his help and Ambion plant for providing the machine and driver. A special mention goes to Harley the Macaw for ‘supervising’ the work after escaping the adjacent tropical Birdland!

The fieldwork and post-excavation were undertaken by Andrew McLeish and project managed by Matthew Beamish for ULAS.

Appendix 1: Site Photos



Figure 10: Trench 1 looking north



Figure 11: Trench 2 looking north



Figure 12: Trench 3 looking south



Figure 13: General view looking north-east



Figure 14: General view looking west



Figure 15: General view north after backfilling

Appendix 2: Site Records - Contexts

Context no.	Type	Trench	Description	Interpretation	Vertical span (m)	Digger	Date recorded
1	Deposit	1	Topsoil of Trench 1. Colour: dark brownish grey. Composition: silty loam. Compaction: waterlogged, spongy. Inclusions: frequent roots.	Topsoil.	0.20 to 0.30	AM	11/03/2024
2	Deposit	1	Subsoil of Trench 1. Colour: mid reddish brown. Composition: sandy clay. Compaction: moist, malleable. Inclusions: rare small sub-rounded spheroidal pebbles, evenly distributed.	Even subsoil layer.	0.40 to 0.50	AM	11/03/2024
2.1	Deposit	2	Topsoil of Trench 2. Colour: dark brownish grey. Composition: silty loam. Compaction: waterlogged, spongy. Inclusions: frequent roots.	Same topsoil as in trenches 1 and 3.	0.20 to 0.30	AM	11/03/2024
2.2	Deposit	2	Subsoil of Trench 2. Colour: mid reddish brown. Composition: sandy clay. Compaction: moist, malleable. Inclusions: rare small sub-rounded spheroidal pebbles, evenly distributed.	Same subsoil as in trenches 1 and 3.	0.26 to 0.39	AM	11/03/2024
2.3	Deposit	2	Natural of Trench 2. Colour: mid pinkish red. Composition: clay. Compaction: moist, firm. Inclusions: moderate large angular platy broken stone, evenly distributed.	Same natural clay deposit as in trenches 1 and 3.	0.09 to 0.09	AM	11/03/2024
3	Deposit	1	Natural of Trench 1. Colour: mid pinkish red. Composition: clay. Compaction: moist, firm. Inclusions: moderate large angular platy broken stone, evenly distributed.	Top of natural clay deposit.	0.15 to 0.00 (avg.)	AM	11/03/2024
3.1	Deposit	3	Topsoil of Trench 3. Colour: dark brownish grey. Composition: silty loam. Compaction: waterlogged, spongy. Inclusions: frequent roots.	Remains of top/garden soil.	0.16 to 0.22	AM	11/03/2024
3.2	Deposit	3	Subsoil of Trench 3. Colour: mid reddish brown. Composition: sandy clay. Compaction: moist, malleable. Inclusions: rare small sub-rounded spheroidal pebbles, evenly distributed.	Same subsoil as in trenches 1 and 2.	0.10 to 0.26	AM	11/03/2024
3.3	Deposit	3	Natural of Trench 3. Colour: mid pinkish red. Composition: clay. Compaction: moist, firm. Inclusions: moderate large angular platy broken stone, evenly distributed.	Natural clay	0.10 to 0.10	AM	11/03/2024

Appendix 3: Site Records – Trenches

No.	Notes	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)
1	Blank trench.	NE-SW	25	1.7	0.76 (avg.)
2	Blank trench.	NE-SW	25	1.7	0.48 to 0.95
3	Blank trench.	NE-SW	25	1.7	0.35 to 0.60

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